3:Nash B-5 (1964-1965)1967
NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Teklum
[P.462-B]

their neighbors by establishing *compadrazgo*, or godparental, relations with them.

Ten of the 37 homicides here reported were committed by immediate consanguineal or affinal relatives of the victim. The high frequency of killings involving brothers or brothers-in-law (8 cases) suggests a locus of high tension in these relationships. Male siblings, the *yermanotak*, comprise the closest cooperating group. Cooperation between brothers is obligatory when wheat is to be threshed, a house built, or a roof rethatched. If a brother or brother-in-law is unavoidably absent, he must pay a substitute. Brothers, or sons and fathers, are the only relationship pairs who work the milpa in common and share the harvest. Bilateral inheritance, with equal division of land and house to both male and female offspring, means that brothers-in-law are potentially equivalent in the competition for goods as well as in their obligation to cooperate. A man kills his sister's husband if the husband is abusive to the woman or to members of the family (two cases). The brother figures not only as a lethal opponent, but also as the man who avenges one's own death (case 18, Table 1). When someone has been killed for witchcraft, his brothers are expected to accept the verdict or to avenge the killing.

[Text continues on p. 463-A]

[p.462-C]

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TABLE 2. SUSPECT, BY MOTIVE FOR HOMICIDE

	Brother	Brother-in-law	Son	Son-in-law	Neighbors	Relative of witchcraft killing	Curers	Cattle owners	Rival for girl	Drunks	Not of community	??	Totals
[688] Victim was accused of witchcraft	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	—	—	—	—	8	18
Victim accused suspect of witchcraft	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
[585] Cattle theft	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	4
[578] Rivalry over girl	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	3
Abusive behavior	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
[579] Drunken quarrel	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	2
[627] Avenge a death (not caused by witchcraft)	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	2
Political conflict	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
??	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2
Total	3	5	1	1	2	2	1	4	3	2	2	11	37

3:Nash E-5 (1964-1965)1967
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682 694 75 these suspicions and kill the witch. If he should kill the witch while the patient is still alive, it is believed that the patient will die.

682 685 674 [463] [697] Killing men for cattle theft (six cases) is a relatively recent occurrence. It has put homicide on the market: the associations of cattle-owners have hired killers in three of the six cases. In addition to the killer's fee, they pay the fine to release him from prison. Fines for homicide have increased in the past five years—from 1,000 to 3,000 pesos—but not sufficiently to price the murder of cattle thieves out of the market. A good bull is worth [435] 1,500 pesos, and the threat of further loss by theft seems to justify the expenditure of fees and fines. When the cattle-owners lose some of their herd, they go to spiritualists or to San Miguel, the talking saint of Ixtapa, to find out who did the stealing. Since such evidence does not hold up in court, legal settlement is not attempted. Legal action, moreover, would create an enemy who might seek revenge. A Ladino secretary of the town center who had lost a bull accused a man of stealing his cattle and demanded 500 pesos in compensation. By receiving the money he jeopardized his safety, and eventually he had to leave town.

685 787 776

685 694

The Resolution of the Case

682 69 It is nearly impossible to find witnesses to homicide. Of these 37 cases, 28 resulted in no action being taken by the authorities, and in five cases where the killers went to jail, they were released with the payment of minimal fines. In the calculations of the townspeople, it is hardly worth risking one's neck to get such a minimal revenge.

682 593 626 [683] However, this does not mean that homicide goes unnoticed in the community. After a killing the widow sings of the life of the dead man. If she is in agreement with the verdict arrived at by the killer and others, she will deny knowledge of what he has done, or even suggest that she too was aware of what harm he has caused (one widow implied that her husband, killed as a witch, was responsible for the death of four of her six children). If she objects to the verdict, she sings of what a good man he was and how blameless. She will then air her own suspicions in the following weeks as to who killed her husband.

682 683 627 Following the funeral, when the women have left the cemetary, the men sit at the grave. As they measure out a liter of liquor and pass it around, they advance hypotheses as

3:Nash E-5 (1964-1965)1967
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to who did it. The consultations with curers prior to the death of the supposed victims of a witch will be introduced as evidence. (Some degree of consensus may have been built up beforehand, in witch-killings, by the public broadcast of accusations noted above.[5]) The focus of the discussion is not so much on who killed the dead man, but whether he was indeed a witch. This kind of mock trial occurs after every funeral, since it must be decided who caused the sickness. Emotions run very high as the liquor is passed around, and accusations are made, sometimes against those present. It was after a funeral that one man killed his son (not included in Table 1) for accusing him of having caused the death of the son's child, who was being buried.

In the weeks following a homicide, it is discussed at all the drinking sessions in the homes or in the town hall. Eventually an authoritative version begins to emerge. Those who have defended the victim then keep silent, and the affair "rests in peace." Avenging the death of a man judged to have been a witch, so far as I know, has never been done. In one case (no. 36, Table 1) the widow of a man killed as a witch vigorously denied the legitimacy of the act and built up a case against the killer. She spread word that it was without doubt the dead man's son by a prior marriage. When the son was killed shortly after (case 37, Table 1), everyone assumed that he had been killed by the widow's son by *her* prior marriage. However, the authoritative version concerning the second killing was that it was an accident: he had been mistaken for his brother, whom the killer was after because of rivalry over a girl.

Rules for Surviving

The patterning of the selection of victims and the circumstances of homicide provide the basis for formulating a set of rules that can ensure survival. The long-range rules of survival, in the words of an elder at the occasion of the death of his godchild, are:

lekon kak'o ta kwenta me?lal
I pay respect to my elders.

kun ku kihts'in kalničan
I greet my younger brothers and my children (classificatory extension of kinship terms).

spisil kak' ta kwenta
To all I give respect.

ho? kil lakotik. Ma talik milal ma talik lamal

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[P.468-A]

accused him of being a witch, he was put in the local jail by the judge and then removed to the departmental capital. During his term of imprisonment an epidemic broke out in the town; it was attributed to witchcraft supposedly practiced by him and by two other curers who remained in town. These two were then imprisoned. After they were set free, all three men were killed in different episodes involving accusations of witchcraft. Permission to act as executioners was granted by the civil authority.

In the past, the public review of a case before a killing probably served to minimize homicide, since permission was not always granted. Since 1953, when a large highway first linked the town to the departmental capital and communication between this center of justice and the local township increased, the civil authority has not given permission, and prior review of witchcraft cases occurs only with epidemics.

The final incident in which the civil authority confronted the curers occurred in the spring of 1966. The president accused one of the curers of cutting short his life by lighting candles in the mountains. The curers were called together to hear the threat and to go to the hill to look at the evidence. The accused curer remained at home pleading that he was sick. He was warned not to pursue his witchcraft, and as yet there has been no use of violence on either side. This open confrontation without the use of violence may indicate a change in the strategy of conflict with the growing power of the president.

(3) *Breakdown of the dual division.* The loss of internal controls in the curing profession and the conflict for power and control by the civil officials and the curers are related to a more fundamental change in the social structure of the community. Formerly the division of the town into two sections provided a channel for opposition as well as cooperation. Recruitment into leadership positions in both the civil hierarchy and the curing hierarchy was based upon residence. The system provided checks and balances in the exercise of power, for the two principales—one from each section of the dual division—were supposed to act as watchdogs over the curers. The shift in the locus of social control from the principales to the president has been marked by the open confrontation with the curers.

The authority of the president, however,

555 ta for minor saints. He alternates between
624 a period of activity and expense and one of
794 quiet and economic recovery. The cargos alternate between church positions and civil government positions, but in communities where Indian tradition is stressed, there is no clear-cut division between civil and religious matters, because of the influence of the sacred and supernatural in daily life.

554 Those functionaries who have a staff of
624 office wield great influence in their calpul.
293 This cane (*nabté*), a sign of important status, is made of pine or other fine wood, and has a silver handle adorned with colored ribbons, primarily yellow, green, and red. The staff is ornamented by the owner and is considered a family object, usually placed
[708] on the home altar. Occasionally it is the
[782] object of prayers and offerings of incense. People carrying it are called *bastonudos*.

624 It is the duty of the staff-carriers to com-
627 municate to every paraje the orders of the ayuntamiento and those coming from the supreme chief of the calpul; to summon people for communal duties; to apprehend prisoners in cases of crime; and to deal with public problems such as taxation and epidemics. Coping with transgressions such as minor stealing, adultery, disputes, and intrigues are also their responsibility within the paraje, following the traditional form of procuring mutual understanding on both sides, in a calm atmosphere, around a bottle
[692] of liquor. If conflict persists, those involved appear before chiefs of the calpul, who are called principales or "cabildos de justicia" even after they have finished their term of office.

794 The cargos from dzunubil on up are sacred and are open only to people with superior knowledge, recognized moral status, and expert experience in church ritual and in the semi-pagan ceremonies practiced in the caves, waterholes, and special mountains. These cargos are thus obtained not by automatic advancement but by special merits which are usually not acquired until advanced age. All such high representatives of

[P 220-B]

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Bachajón

501 raft, *poi*, to cross rivers or make very short trips. The specimen observed at *Hol-ha'* (Head of the Water), was made of five cork logs averaging 22 centimeters in diameter and 3.25 meters long, held together by two cross-sticks lashed on with lianas. There was some space between each log, the width of the raft being 1.25 meters. It had a definite bow and stern, the logs at the forward end being cut to an edge, "to cut the water." These rafts are propelled by a pole, preferably of mahogany, the one observed being 2.50 meters long. They are moored by thrusting the pole through a crack between two of the logs, into the bottom of the stream.

648 As one would expect, the old, complicated organization of priests and rulers, the aristocracy of pre-Conquest days, has been utterly swept away. Today, in their social organization, one may trace a little of the feeling of the old times, but the system is the creature of Spanish contact. On the haciendas there are no native officials save those who preside over the fiestas. The owner of the hacienda maintains a patriarchal sway over his workmen, governing them in every respect. Among the village tribes at Bachajon and Sivacá life is still influenced by the obligation to work for the government or the ranchers, although the independent nature of the Indians has won for them a good deal of self-government. Those of the Bachajon living on land belonging to ranches find themselves under a dual system, although the scattered location of their dwellings, deep in the jungles, minimizes the power of the Ladinos.

621 The tribes are very different from those of North America. From our brief observation, it appears as though there was none of that deep feeling of loyalty towards the group, of essential, almost mystic unity with the other members that characterizes our own Indians. Similar customs, common interest, and geographical proximity hold each Tzeltal group together; bonds that are easily broken. [609] Should an outsider attack the common weal by seizure of land or [578] by any other infringements, he will find the tribe solidly united against him, but at the same time it may be, and often is divided 627 within itself by many quarrels. The Bachajon carry out long feuds between families and individuals in the form of occasional murders. These have their origin in delayed retribution for some wrong received by one party from the other, for which, in turn, there is retaliation, and so on indefinitely.

For instance, the murder committed while we were at Encanto was the climax of a long-nursed grudge, and almost immediately afterwards there were indications that from that fight would arise 648 many others. Occasional attacks on ranchers are also usually carried

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Bachajón

out by a small group bearing a grudge, although in this case the tribe as a whole stands more solidly back of the offenders. 648

The Bachajon exhibit internal dissension and strife to an unusual degree. There are many small, outlying sub-groups, some of which are more or less openly at war with the main body. In the description of Zona Sala oil camp (Chapter VIII) something has already been said of the settlement there of men driven away on account of the misbehaviour. They still call themselves Bachajon and maintain some slight intercourse with the tribe, although they are quite inimical in their attitude towards Indians passing through on the way to Palenque. There are other such settlements in different parts of the jungle, although these, having most recently split off, are the most hostile. 628

What group loyalty the Bachajon have centers around the deserted village that bears their name. It was described at the beginning of this chapter. Founded under compulsion, deserted whenever possible, its church and Cabildo in ruins, none the less it is their focal point, jealously guarded from intrusion. These Indians have had the same experience as our own; the European comes first as a visitor, then a few settle for trade, then comes a host in their footsteps, until soon there is no place for the Indian, and he finds himself an intruder in his own home. Against this sequence of events, so common in our history, the Bachajon protect their land by an attitude of unremitting hostility. Travellers may pass through, but no trader may set up even a lean-to bower under which to display his wares, save during the few days of their main fiestas, although it would be a great convenience for them to have a store nearer than Ocosingo. 621 609

The destruction of the Spanish-built church and Cabildo, with the substitution for them of native edifices, is curious. The feeling probably is that when they do congregate in their capital for a fiesta, they do not wish to be confronted by evidences of alien domination. 829

The strongest actual unit is that of the individual family, the man, his wife, and children. Indians who are forced, for one reason or another, to go into hiding in the jungle, will run great risks to return and fetch their wives and children. Even beyond this smallest group there is a little feeling, a man's relatives by marriage or blood often joining to support him in a feud, or to revenge a wrong done him. Similarly, the relatives of the individual who committed the wrong are held in some degree liable to punishment, although there is no formal rule of collective responsibility, the action taken depending largely on individual inclination. 593 594 602 627 [672]

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Cancuc

boulders with care. It still is broad in most places, and has reasonable grades. We climbed to a rather desolate upland of wind-swept grass with a few crooked trees. There was some traffic on the road. We passed a group of Tenejapeños going down to the hot country to carry sugar. The men were ragged and woolly, like those we had seen at Salto de Agua, and their women, in short blue skirts and white blouses gorgeously ornamented with gold and crimson silk, were remarkable for their very pink cheeks showing through dark brown colouring.

The town of Cancuc (*kank'uk*) lies on the rounded shoulder of a long ridge that juts up above the high moors commanding a tremendous view North, West, and South over a jumbled mass of mountain ranges, like a herd of great elephants shouldering away to the horizon. A wind blows day and night, the trees are small and stunted, and the general effect is one of bleakness and height. At an altitude of 1,440 meters, with the unresting wind, it is always cold. The highroad climbs from a ravine up into the village where a small plaza is laid out on a level place. On our left was the big, white church, still well preserved. Opposite it, the Cabildo surprised us, a neat building with tile roof and white columned portico, built in President Diaz' time. Round about were some tumbling and ruined huts, and behind, the village rose on rough terraces crudely faced with stone.

Cancuc has a stormy history. It was the center of the famous rebellion of 1712, the subject of Brinton's "Maria Candelaria."* According to Starr (1904) who passed through here, there is a tradition that the men's long hair, covering their ears, is so worn in memory of the clipped ears which their ancestors received at that time. Recently, there has been political dissension in the form of a dragging feud, and a series of small fights and murders has resulted in those left of the defeated party abandoning the village and setting up their houses in the bush. It is from this that one sees so many huts deserted and beginning to disintegrate, adding to the general cheerless aspect of the place.

We were well received at the Cabildo, where the village officials with their silver-headed canes turned up shortly to look us over. They were younger men than most of the officials we had met previously, and a pretty tough looking crew, much what one would expect of a group that had attained office largely by means of the machete. The people on the whole rather resemble the Bachajon physically, being of a small-limbed type with an average height for men of about 160 centimeters, and nearly beardless. The men wear tunics cut as at Tenango, but decorated with red and yellow em-

*Brinton, 1887; Pineda, 1888.

273* 754 539 . . . When he's drunk he says, "you haven't paid your tax yet!" (This is interpreted by our informant as meaning that none of the listener's children has yet died and, further, that the speaker can guarantee that some of them will die.)

HAYUN HIC MA XC'AY TA YO*TANIK HAL KRISTYANETIK I.

And so the hearts of the people don't forget this.

XLIHK CAMEL TA TEHKLUM HA* YA XKUC STUKEL.

When the illness begins in the community they blame him.

... TA SKAHABI YA XLAH TA MILEL YUN SBOLIL.

Because of this they kill him for his foolishness.

MA* TOHUK XYAKUB.

He doesn't get drunk the way one ought to.

273* 518 Physical aggression against drinking companions usually has immediate physical consequences. One fight which occurred between two drunken young men in the cemetery at the fiesta of Todos Santos ended with a broken arm for one of them, and in another fight hospital care was needed for the victim. Sabino Hernandez, on waking up after a night of drinking, is puzzled to find his hand sprained, because, as he remembers,

[539] MAYU*NUK *AY MA*C'A LAH KUT H'A SOK, TONC YU*N TOH LAH KU*C' HAL HC'IN KA*AL I.

I didn't fight with anybody, I just drank my aguardiente the way one ought to.

273* 593 621 Drunken men who beat their wives can expect retaliation in kind only rarely, but a mistreated wife may complain of her husband's behavior to his elders, who will reprimand him and exact a promise to reform.

court usually demands a nominal fine (10 pesos--about a day's wages--being the customary amount), and sometimes the defendant will apologize as well. In one such case, the plaintiff had to have hospital care, and the defendant was ordered to pay the bill (30 pesos) instead of a fine. Where the fighting ended in a death, both fine and damages are charged, as in the murder case already mentioned in text above:

M. PERO ME LAHWAN YAK' TAK'IN TOHUBEH.

I wonder how much money it was settled for.

J. KINYENTOS PESO LAH YAK' HIL.

He handed over five hundred pesos.

M. ME HA* LAH SMUK Z'IN TE MAC'A CAM E.

Did he pay for the funeral of the dead man?

J. PUES MA HNA*TIK, MA YU*N LAH YA*BE SIYERO TRESYENTOS PESO.

Well, I don't know, maybe he gave him something like three hundred pesos.

M. APARTE XAN Z'IN TE KINYENTO LAH YAK'HIL E.

Apart from the five hundred that he handed over?

J. APARTE Z'IN *EHK HATE KINYENTOS PE E LAH YAK' HIL TA KABILTA.

Apart from the five hundred pesos that he handed over to the court.

It is important that in this case, the murderer not only paid the fine and damages (through his wife) but also found it advisable to leave the community. Murder and witchcraft do not

682 admit of truly restitutive outcomes in Aguacatenango; an indi-
627 vidual is dead and cannot be reclaimed, and from the point of view of the Aguacatenanguero, nothing can reduce the survivors' sense of vulnerability except another life. Furthermore, any sanction short of death or permanent expulsion from the community
682 might result in reprisals. The Aguacatenango court has no popu-
627 lar mandate and hence no power or desire to hand down a death
692 sentence to a community member; the most severe sanction it can employ for a murder is a heavy fine-plus-damages. Since this sanction falls short of the family's needs, the court is rarely consulted in such cases; when such cases do come to court, they are often dismissed (sometimes on the basis of lack of evidence, for murders and witchcraft are not often observed by witnesses) or referred to the municipio court.

627 Murder and witchcraft are usually dealt with by means of
682 penalizing strategies, most often murder or the threat of it which
754 will drive the individual permanently out of the community. A lesser penalizing strategy--breaking off interaction--is sometimes used in such cases, particularly if the jeopardized party is weak or the evidence is inconclusive. For example, Josefa Lopez' husband was accused of doing witchcraft against a neighbor's wife. When her husband was later killed while drinking, nobody saw the killing but Josefa "knew" that the dead woman's son had done it out of vengeance. Josefa, now a widow with small

627 682 754 children and without father or brothers to support her, found it impossible either to retaliate or to remain under the eye of the "killer," so she moved to a distant part of the community.

578 627 More often, breaking interaction is used as a penalizing strategy in less serious conflicts. For example, a daughter-in-law living in her husband's paternal household complained that her father-in-law scolded her when he was drunk and, in order to reduce her vulnerability, left the house and returned to live with her own family. Sometimes, in such a case, the husband will attempt to make restitution in response to the penalty and the conflict will be resolved. Another case, mentioned in text earlier, is that of Aurelia Ramirez and her unwelcome house guest; she appealed to the young man's father-in-law and had him removed from her house. The penalizing nature of this strategy is illustrated in the text which followed (also cited above); the conflict remained "active" in the relationship between Aurelia and the young man in that he returned to threaten her with witchcraft. Aurelia's next move is instructive; still feeling vulnerable, she sought the judgment of the court. However, this being a case of threat of witchcraft, the court refused to rule. She describes her rebuff as follows:

[692] [754] [539] KIK' Z'IN KALBE LO*L SME*L NEAL, KOMO PRESIDENTE.

I went out to speak to his father-in-law, since he is president.

578
627
539 MALA TUTA YAL, MALA TUTA SLOK'ES, YU*N HO*N LA HA HLE HK'OP, HO*N LA PIS TYTA KALTLAN LA.

[He said] that he isn't saying anything, that he isn't taking anything, that I'm lying, that I'm the one who's saying it all.

273 * 578 In general, persisting conflicts arising from drunken behavior are relatively infrequent among highly relational role pairs--people who live in the same household and/or are tied to each other by extensive obligations, such as parent-child, sibling-sibling, husband-wife, parent-in-law-child-in-law. In this role set, drunken behavior tends to be discounted or excused on later apology by the offender. When persisting conflicts occur, they are usually handled by means of restitutive strategies employed within the family and do not reach the community court. On the other hand, persisting conflicts based on drunken behavior among lowly relational pairs--people whose obligations toward each other are relatively few, such as siblings-in-law, neighbors, persons of opposite barrios (in descending order)--are fairly common. Indeed, all of the fighting and much of the murder and witchcraft in this role set involve drunkenness. Here there is perhaps no basis for discounting drunken behavior or less [692] opportunity to make apologies. In any case, these conflicts tend to be taken to the community court--the only authority which both parties recognize--for a restitutive outcome when only injury is involved, and they tend to be handled with severe penaliz-

754 mentions that the man (one Margarito Mendez) claimed to be a witch while he was drinking. Hence without knowing whether Margarito Mendez was the witch in this particular case, but knowing that he was thought to be a witch in general, the men attributed the deaths to him.

754 627 *273 To kill a witch is a dangerous undertaking. The community should be in agreement, and the mode of killing must be sure or the coalition of the witch will defend him and take counter action against the assassins. In this context, drinking places the individuals in that condition of lack of fear in which they can complete the affair without undue consideration of its effects on their further plans.

754 539 An example of the specific statement of the fear reflex in naming witches appears in Ausencio Espinoza's monologue, where one finds the assertions (made at the funeral of a youth who was presumed to have died of witchcraft):

HA* Z'IN ABI YA YAL SPISIL MAC'ATIK XK'OK TA MUKAHEL I,

And afterward, all those who went to the funeral said,

CIKAN *AY MA*C'A LAH HAK'HOL CAMEL I, PERO MA SPAS TA HALEL MAC'A LA YAK', TA REPENTA ME LA YA*BOTIK *EHK E.

"We know who caused the illness, but we can't say who did it, for he might quickly make us ill also."

HA*YU*N MA SPAS YALEL PORKE YAN K'OP XI'BINTIK SBA XCILIK HAL WINIKETIK I.

"For this reason, it isn't possible to say it, because it's bad talk, it's dangerous," said the men.

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

Acknowledgments

My study of the people of Tzo'ontahal was made in four field sessions, the first in 1957 with return trips in 1958, 1964, and 1965, for a total of eighteen months. Brief visits were made in 1966 and 1967. With each returning visit it was possible to penetrate more deeply into the lives and experiences of the villagers, most of whom were highly resistant to an outsider on the first contact. I began writing the book in 1966, and some of the predictions I made came true before I finished it in 1968. These included the demise of the ceremonial leadership of the *alfereces*—the officials in charge of religious celebrations—the waning of the community status of curers, and the killing of one of my principal informants who had taken a leadership role before acquiring the traditional validation of age and experience in office. The transformations over the period of my study in this community created difficulties in recording and organizing my material. I owe whatever clarification has emerged to the efforts of Jane Olson and Gale Griffin of Yale University Press.

I am indebted to the National Institutes of Mental Health, which made possible the research for this study. I owe an intellectual debt to Sol Tax, who introduced me to the problems and potentialities of the area as a locus for field study, to Norman McQuown, who gave me the first instruction in Tzeltal and provided a grammar which facilitated learning the language, and to Manning Nash, who provided some of the earlier formulations of the culture from which I have borrowed. I am grateful to Duane Metzger and Gerald Williams, who generously provided equipment and facilities for work with informants in San Cristóbal Las Casas in the summer of 1964. Alfonso Villa Rojas, who was director of the Instituto Nacional Indígenista, was of great assistance in the first summer's field trip, introducing me to leaders within the town and in the Instituto's headquarters in Las Casas.

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

pact settlement with the emphasis on the bilateral kinship group. The authority of the elders in settling conflicts in the family and the community is weakened, although the hierarchy remains intact. In religious institutions, the personnel has remained the same, but the authority of the religious officials has weakened and the belief in the deities and ancestral figures has been undermined.

Political leadership is the most dynamic area of change. The power of the *principales* had already been taken over by young civil officials when I first went to the town in 1957. The curers, who retained the power derived from belief in their control over the supernatural, were the core of resistance to change in the decade that I knew the community. But this control was being challenged by civil officials and factional leaders, who were aware of its repressive effect. The dynamic aspect of the political sector is linked to the fact that the new leaders saw the necessity of seizing power from those who were privileged in the traditional society. They were reworking the social structure to pave the way for the acceptance of development opportunities being offered by the national government.

In Chapters 10, 11, and 12 I have summarized the structuring of behavior in roles, place, and time and described how these patterns have been affected by change. The following questions are raised in the summary chapters:

1. The role system: How are people recruited into roles? How are roles coordinated? How are performances evaluated? The matrix of roles provides the patterned expectations of what others will do in a given situation. Some of the decisions made in assigning people to roles allow little room for choice. In other cases, new functions, such as those imposed upon governing officials, have replaced traditional bases for making decisions and in turn upset the balance of power between elders, curers, and leaders in civil office. (Continuity and change in the role structure are analyzed in Chapter 10.)

2. The setting: How is appropriate behavior defined for each institutional setting? What kinds of behavior are replicated in each setting? How are changes in role relations reflected in positions assumed in each setting? Observations of behavior in the church and the

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970

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231 233 cattle was seized by bandits or soldiers. It is "new" only in the size of the holdings, which have expanded from ownership of one or two head per household, primarily useful as draft animals, to a herd as large as two hundred head belonging to the wealthiest man in town. Cattle rearing is now a capital investment for resale as well as for draft animals in plow agriculture.

233 311 312 621 575 The increasing herds have stimulated competition for community resources. The control of communal grazing and waterhole rights is exercised through the traditional dual division of the town, with rights to pasture allocated on the basis of residence in the upper or lower barrio of the center. An association of cattle owners has developed in each of the sections, and the leaders of each association call together all members to clean the water holes and repair the troughs. A recent project of the cattle association of the upper section has been the erection of a large cross at the [789] water hole. The water had dried up the year before, and the installation of the cross was an attempt to ensure a continuous supply of water in the future. The priest blessed the cross in the dedication, and the fiscal and [796] prayer-reciters adorn it each year on May 3, the Day of the Cross in the old Catholic calendar, along with other crosses of the village.

233 621 578 575 627 Cattle grazing is the source of much of the conflict in the town. The cattle roam freely in the woods and communal pasture lands, and many are lost or stolen. The cattle association has not fenced in the pasture in order to control it. Their tactics have been punitive; they have raised funds from among members to hire men to kill suspected cattle thieves. In the last twenty years, six men have been killed as cattle thieves, and at least three of those were known to be killed by men hired by the association, which then paid the court fines to set the killers free. The leader of one of the cattle associations was killed after an incident in which he fined a man who had failed to assist in cleaning the water holes. The fine of 2 pesos per head of cattle represented a large fee for the man, who had sixty head. He refused to pay more than half, since he said he had not been notified. [754] When his daughter later died of illness, he blamed her death on witchcraft exercised by the cattle association leader, and later killed him.

231 434 Cattle are only minimally exploited as a resource. The cattle are not butchered locally since there is not a large enough market, but are sold to

The funeral procession leaves for the cemetery about three in the afternoon. Attending the body are the padrinos, parents, aunts, and uncles. If the deceased is a child under two years of age, he is carried by his madrina. One of the former fiscales or someone who knows how to pray goes along. Smaller siblings or children of the dead are left at home with the maliwanchetik, who in this case are chosen from among the more distant relatives, compadres, and neighbors not attending the funeral. As they walk, the women cry and the "owner of the dead," the woman closest of kin, wails constantly in the stylized mourning cry. She stops wailing only when the company stops to pray at the cross at the exit of the town and just before entering the graveyard. At each resting point, the fiscal, who holds a rosary, reads the prayer book, while a neighbor or compadre uses a geranium to sprinkle holy water on the spot. An older male relative holds a palm cross.

When the party arrives at the opened grave, the godmother sits down near the coffin to make the final arrangements. The grave has been opened prior to the arrival of the party, but sometimes the men widen the hole. If they come across a bone, the fiscal shakes holy water over it with the geranium. When a nursing child is buried, the mother leans over the coffin and puts her breast in the child's mouth just before he is lowered into the grave. This is done so that the child's spirit will not think any longer of returning. The godparent or some other attendant dips the geranium in water and shakes it over the body. Handfuls of dirt are then thrown into the coffin. It is at this point that the assembled group, including the men, breaks into loud wails. The wails of the funeral party, though they do not lack feeling, are most important as a controlled communication, uttered when it is appropriate and by particular persons who are expected to cry before a select audience.

As the neighbors who have come to help the bereaved relatives shovel dirt on the grave, the padrino of the deceased approaches the fiscal and recites the pat?o?tan of blessing for the gift of liquor. The liquor is measured in a shot glass and passed around to the company. The women leave soon, and the men remain drinking. At this point a kind of trial is held to see who is responsible for the death. Since almost all sickness is believed to be caused by witchcraft, it is important to decide who the guilty person

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might be. The father or closest male kin of the dead person is careful to recount all the consultations he has had with curers, both to absolve himself of the guilt of neglect or unconscious witchcraft and to search for the true culprit.

A proper burial with holy water, flowers, grave offerings, and prayers assures the survivors that the soul of the deceased will rest and his bones will lie in peace. Lacking any of these features, the dead will disturb the living, as is recounted below:

During the revolution, many were buried without a funeral or without blessed water. On Thursday, the bones burn and cry. You can still see a blue flame rising above the old graveyard on Thursday. You can find money that the ancestors left there, but you have to go at night to dig it up.

An important safeguard to ensure that the soul will lie in peace is burial among people with whom the deceased lived. When a married adult dies, he is buried with his dead spouse. If he had two dead spouses, he is buried with the first spouse on the right hand and the second on the left. A child is buried with the grandparents of the household in which he lived—that is, if he lived with his mother's parents he is buried with them, and if with the father's parents, then with them. When people know that they are going to die, they express their preference as to where they wish to be buried. Usually they will elect to be buried between their dead parents, but if they were unhappy with their parents, they might choose a padrino or uncle. If dissatisfied in its resting place, a soul, even when properly buried, cannot find peace and wanders back to the house. Fearing this, relatives try to comply with the wishes of the dead.

My grandfather used to say that he wanted to be buried between his mother and father. But when he was about to die, he said, "I don't want to be buried there because my father beat me. He will continue beating my soul. I want to go on the side [of the cemetery]. Please don't bury me near my parents." My father said, "All right, we will put you on the side."

The funeral must meet the expectations of the community as well as those of the deceased and his relatives. The mature children of a man who

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sulted with each other to determine who was bringing in the heat. They privately disposed of the evil by causing the evildoer to die of an illness. At the time of my stay, suspicion of the curers meant that a public hearing was held in the town hall to determine who the guilty person was; usually one of the curers themselves was suspected (Chapter 9).

The curers formerly demonstrated their beneficial power by bringing rain during a fiesta held in the cave of the ancestors. This is described by an informant:

When the pueblo lacked rain in the growing season of corn in May and June, the leading curers went with the other curers, the fiscal, the alfereces, the mayordomos, and the women prayer-reciters to the cave. All the women carried candles of a peso or fifty-cent size and incense burners. They drank a great deal of liquor at the mouth of the cave and then entered to dance. The mayordomos played the guitar, the drum, and flute as the women danced and the curers prayed to the me?tiktatik. There used to be a spring in this cave, people say, and the ancestors granted water from it when they were given a fiesta.

The last fiesta for rain occurred about 1950. The whole town contributed two pesos for the liquor and candles. The leading curer then was Juliano, a man recognized for his powers in curing and in bringing rain. He told the people that he spoke to the me?tiktatik who, he said, were dressed in the old style [a shirt worn over short cotton pants still used by older men of the town, and the handwoven hat worn by alfereces today]. The curers told the people that it would rain, and the afternoon of the fiesta, it came down hard.

There is no longer faith that the ancestors live in the cave, nor that the present curers could speak to them if they did.

The growing discontent with the curers, the suspicion that they are responsible for much of the witchcraft, is reflected in the account of an older informant.

The curer O. K. told me that the curers ate the spirits of sick people who were going to die. The sick people would come to ask the curers for

Sometimes a colicky baby may become the focus of a curing ceremony designed to "cure" the conflict between husband and wife. In one case, the parents of a healthy young wife separated from her husband staged a curing ceremony to dramatize her marital plight to the in-laws.

The breakdown of the curing hierarchy and the recruitment procedures which were maintained by the elder leaders (see Chapter 10) has led to a reevaluation of the role of the curers in the community. They have lost their position as me'iltatil representing the ancestors who guard over the community. Curers are increasingly being accused of sorcery, and over ten of them have been killed in the past decade as witches (Nash, J. 1967). Paradoxically, it is the belief in their evil power which leads to their persisting role in the society. Clients feel that the more evil the curer is, the more able he is to combat evil. In a community dominated by belief in witchcraft, they are both feared and valued for their ability to control it. From a position as arbiters of morality, they have become the chief targets as deviants from the moral code. Despite the loss of confidence in curers as guardians, they are still called upon to fight the evil of witchcraft, and nearly every day a ritual is performed. The regimen of the curing ritual has not been upset by the undermining of the curers' position. Tied to a diagnostic system emphasizing the state of the patient's social relations, the same procedures are carried out even when modern medicines are used.

In curing practices, the Indian sees himself as the key figure in the drama of his own self-victimization. His illnesses come from within his own world, usually from within his family or close neighborhood. They are a mark of guilt for having excited the envy or hatred of associates. While the Indian is often portrayed in the role of passive victim to outside domination, in his own self-projection he sees himself dominated by powers within the community. Greater participation and equality in the wider society may in the future release him from these fear-provoking figures in his own environment.

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view of the case by the judges and the other civil authorities, the president would have the suspected witch locked up in the local jail and then give the key to his enemy. The following story illustrates this procedure:

When we were still part of the township of Teopisca [sometime before 1931] F. went and asked permission of the authorities to kill his enemy, a curer, whom he thought was bewitching his brother-in-law. The president arrived at the house of the suspected witch with the order to imprison him. He said that they were going to Teopisca to put him in jail. The group of authorities set off with the suspected witch. On the way another group met them and asked them where they were going. The President replied, "To Teopisca." The group which had encountered them asked them if they would like a drink to "heat their body." They gave one cup and then another. They then cut up the suspected witch with a machete and put his body in the cave of me?tiktatik that goes to Chiapa de Corzo. When the widow enquired the next day where her husband was, the president said that the man must have gone to the finca.

After telling this story, my informant concluded, "Therefore, little by little, the pueblo is getting better because we scared the curers with the permission of the president to kill them." He felt that this was the point at which the power of the curers, who were more and more frequently being accused as witches, was broken.

While the usual course of action, once a man was accused of witchcraft, was to kill him so that there would be no danger of revenge, the following case illustrates punishment by beating.

The time was 1935. There was a very bad curer who stole much cattle. One man who heard that he had stolen his cattle wanted to kill him, but the curer met the man and killed him in an old house. The town authorities seized the curer and forced him to pay one thousand pesos for the bull. The principales punished him by tying him to a tree and beating him five or six times. They beat him well for the town. After they beat him they brought him to prison in San Cristóbal and gave him over to the Ministerio Publico to arrange the case. He did not return to the pueblo but went to another place. In five years he returned to his pueblo.

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When he arrived here, he did not hear any word that they would kill him. He persisted in his custom of stealing. And the pueblo seized him and put him in prison. The whole town seized him although he had heard no word.

They tied him to a tree and said to him, "You do not have shame. You are a curer, father of the pueblo, [respect term for curer], and yet you behaved badly and truly stole. The town sees you are a bad man, Emilio. They call you their father, but now I am going to tell you that you ought not to be called father. You're a bad one."

He wanted to be called father, but he was only a bad one. He returned again to San Cristóbal because of two crimes. He did not hear the words. He remained in prison, and when he came out someone else came and killed him.

Since 1938, nine of the thirty-seven homicide cases on which I collected data (Table 29) were killings of curers. The increasing frequency of such killings reveals the loss of faith in the guardianship role of the curers, but along with this, retention of belief in their power to work evil.

In the series of successful confrontations, the civil authority has gained strength and overcome some of the fear of the people. In May 1964, during a severe contagion of measles, a rumor started that the disease was being spread because of witchcraft. The president called together the curers. The consensus of this gathering was that a certain curer of Alannantik had buried the "heat" which was causing the deaths in the milpa of his enemy. The people of Alannantik gathered with the curers and the civil officials in the milpa of the "enemy" to dig it out. The curers dug out a charcoal brazier which is the sign of illness and threw it in the Cave of the Star. That evening the suspected witch was killed, presumably by his neighbors.

In the most recent confrontation between the civil authorities and an individual curer, in March 1966, the civil authorities showed a united front in denouncing the use of witchcraft to threaten any official. The entire group of practicing curers from both sides of the dual division were called to witness the denunciation before the assembled civil officials in the town hall. The only one absent was the curer accused of attempting to cut short the life of the president because of envy of his position. The assembled

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 248]

TABLE 29. Time, Victim, Suspects, Crime, and Outcome in Selected Homicide Cases, 1938–1965

	Victim				
	Curer or other	*Age*	*Killer*	*Suspected crime of victim*	*Outcome*
1938 *	Other	50	Unknown	Witchcraft	No one apprehended
1945	Other	65	Drinking companions	Drunken quarrel	Two companions went to jail
1946	Curer	48	Brothers: 1 elder, 2 younger	Witchcraft	One brother went to jail for five years
1946 *	Other	38	Unknown	Witchcraft	No one complained to authorities
1946	Curer	45	Unknown	Witchcraft	No punishment; no suspect apprehended
1946	Curer	50	Unknown	Witchcraft	Wife of victim complained, but no witness would testify
1958	Curer	27	Father of boy who had died of witchcraft	Witchcraft	Before dying, dead man revealed name of killer. Wife reported it to authorities, but no action taken
1960 *	Other	60	Son-in-law	Witchcraft	Son-in-law fled town
1960	Other	24	Cattle owners' paid killer	Stole cattle	Released killer on bail
1960	Curer	60	Brother-in-law	Witchcraft	No one apprehended
1961	Curer	70	Neighbors	Witchcraft	Neighbors, who felt he was responsible for contagion, were not apprehended
1961 *	Other	30	Wife's brother	Very abusive, fought when drunk	Suspect fled town

(*cont.*)

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	Victim: Curer or other	Victim: Age	Killer	Suspected crime of victim	Outcome
1961 *	Other	45	Neighbors	Witchcraft	No one apprehended
1961 *	Other	37	Unknown	Witchcraft	No one apprehended; wife agreed he was a witch
1962	Other	18	Rival for girl	Fought over girl	No one accused
1962	Other	20	Cattle owners' paid killer	Stole cattle	Went to jail but released on bail
1962	Other	35	Brother-in-law	Revenge for death of brother; political conflict	Killer declared he had killed, paid fine and was released
1962 *	Other	20	Rival for girl	Fought over girl	No one accused
1962 *	Other	50	Leader of cattle association	Stole cattle	Unknown
1963 *	Curer	36	Unknown	Witchcraft	No one apprehended, but victim's brother tried to find killer
1963	Curer	45	Indian of neighboring town whom victim had accused of witchcraft	False accusation	No action taken
1963 *	Other	Unknown	Drinking companions	Barroom brawl	One of assailants went to jail, and other two bailed out
1963	Other	70	Sons of a man whom he was accused of having killed	Witchcraft	No action taken
1964 *	Other	30	Killer paid by victim's brothers	Stole cattle	Brother fled town but jailed when he returned
1964 *	Other	34	Unknown	Witchcraft	No one accused
1964	Other	30	Ladino liquor distiller of another town	Denounced distiller to authorities	No action taken

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	Victim: Curer or other	Age	Killer	Suspected crime of victim	Outcome
1964	Other	30	Brothers	Witchcraft	One brother fled; other put in jail but he claimed first brother did it
1964	Curer	65	Neighbors	Witchcraft in contagion	No action taken
1964	Other	22	Close friend of victim, hired by cattle owners	Stole cattle	Killer freed on bail
1965	Other	45	Unknown	Witchcraft	No one accused
1965 *	Other	45	Unknown	Witchcraft	No one apprehended
1965	Other	42	Unknown	Unknown	No one accused
1965	Other	27	Brother-in-law	Had relations with 14-year-old sister-in-law	Brother-in-law tried but not sufficient evidence
1965 *	Other	35	Unknown	Stole cattle and corn	No action taken
1965	Other	42	Son by first marriage	Failed to provide dowery; also witchcraft	Widow spread rumors against step-son, but insufficient evidence
1965	Other	20	Rival for brother's girl	Mistaken identity—brother's rival took him for competitor	Unknown

* Occurred during a fiesta.

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group walked to the hill where the curer had been reported practicing his witchcraft. There they collected the evidence: fourteen candles of all colors, crosses of wire placed on a photograph, and a gourd. The curers present lifted the evidence and threw it in the river to get rid of the evil. A transcription of the proceedings in the town hall is given below:

President: "We are gathered together here because something which is not good has happened. See here, Tatinel [*to the leading curer*], *we do not know if it is witchcraft or not."*

First Curer Feliciano, of Yetawitz: "The old men [*elder curers*] *have pulsed our children. All the pueblo has helped. We have just brought in the candles. He is a very bad witch. We walked out there and we found it. For this we have gathered together, but if there is an owner of the witchcraft, we have not heard."*

Second Curer Emilio, of Alannantik: "But this owner is not good. Thus spoke my compadre. This is not good. So my compadre and Mam Pelise [*Feliciano, first curer to speak*] *have spoken. Whoever did it has not advised us. The ancestors did not want this. Now who wants it? Who speaks with the holy word? You do not announce whether it is a curer or whether it is or not. We do not know where it is or what it is that he did. But when someone does give an illness, it is a good custom to see where this comes from. This we do not know. It is for this we went to the cave to know where he found it."*

President: "Therefore we had to look for it and see who did it; whether it is someone who knows how to do both witchcraft and curing. But he will pay here in the presidency for what he did, because we are going to announce it, we are going to reveal the crime. Now your hearts are content and truly you cannot do it. Now we know a little, compadre. Truly we have seen and know where it [*the magic*] *was kept."*

Feliciano: "Now you speak a little to God who gave his little child. And what if tomorrow you should come? Now is the time we speak to God, we speak to the Virgin Mother. Don't kill and don't give suffering. Better not do anything. Please don't do anything at night; please do nothing as I have told you. Thus your children [*the younger curers*] *have*

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heard our hearts. The people will hear that we didn't do anything. The true curers looked. We came to the place and we found it."

The curers left the town hall, one by one, saying the pat?o?tan to the judges as they left. The judges remained.

President: "We have heard clearly what we waited here to hear. They have brought back a little soda."

Judge: "So it is for your work [referring to the soda], what you went to do there [in the hills]."

President: "It is good what you did, but you are afraid because of that." Judges laugh.

The curers in public performances nominally recognize as leading curers the two major speakers for the group, Feliciano of Yetawitz and Emilio of Alannantik. However, these men are not recognized as true leaders. Feliciano lives in the despised barrio of Yetawitz and is associated with the kuriketik, (the inhabitants of the colonia of San Vicente), while Emilio himself has been accused of witchcraft. But the situation required someone to represent the group from each side, and so there was compliance with this temporary role.

In the public gathering, the curers refrained from accusing anyone, and denied that they had knowledge of the witch. The older curer (not recognized as leader but serving in the place of an elder) warned the group not to kill anyone as a result of the meeting. That evening, the president and his brother announced on the loudspeaker of the cantina that they did know who was trying to murder the president, that it was the curer who was absent, and that he should desist. The curer responded by announcing on another cantina loudspeaker that he was innocent. On the following day, the accused appeared in the town hall with two family-sized bottles of beer. He said that he did not want the president to continue accusing him, since he was not guilty and had truly been sick. (He had consulted the I.N.I. clinic nurse rather than one of his colleagues and had received treatment for a headache. This was commented upon by his opponents, who interpreted it as showing his lack of faith in traditional curing practices.)

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The open confrontation by the civil authorities with the suspected witch, in which they warned him to stop before violence resulted, represents a new strategy in the contest between officials and curers. Formerly even when there was strong suspicion against a man, the principales and judges kept quiet. If they acted, it was to kill the suspect without forewarning. The new strategy reveals the position of strength from which they now operate. That the president could joke in the town hall about the fear of the judges in dealing with the accused curer (see his final remark above) is indicative of a changed attitude. Incidents such as that of the curer consulting the clinic nurse instead of his fellow curers, which was noted and commented upon by the brother of the president, may further serve to undermine the townspeople's belief in the power of the curers.

In the weeks following the incident, the president and his brother discussed the incident, pointing out their fearlessness in openly confronting the witch. The curers clearly tried to deny any responsibility as a group with the remark: "Whoever did it did not advise us." They expressed the feeling that it is against professional ethics: "Whoever did it is a very bad witch"; but they refuse to name him or admit knowledge of who did it. "We do not know where it is or what it is that he did." The behavior of the curers in this incident is clearly defensive and stems from their loss of control and initiative.

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Political Parties and Factions

In 1950 the first contest for the post of president was started by two brothers who had secured the backing of the Partido Acción Nacional (PAN). Never before had anyone initiated his own candidacy outside the traditional nomination procedure through the old officials in the town hall. The brothers lived in the new barrio of Yut Hok, the ejido land grant of Ahk'olnantik. The candidacy disturbed the customary alternation of posts between Ahk'olnantik and Alannantik. Threatened by the imbalance, the leaders of Alannantik secured the backing of the Partido Revolucionario Institutionalizado (PRI) for their candidate. The PAN candidate won the election. However, he was never able to consolidate political sup-

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"gift of the gods," liquor, to the party whose interests have been slighted. This is done in the case of a suitor who is asking for a woman of the other side of the dual division; he gives the bachelors of that side a garrafón of liquor in compensation for the loss of a potential mate. Liquor has become a substitute for the sacrifice of a child by a man being initiated into the curing profession. Informal offerings of liquor may be made between neighbors or relatives who have been fighting with each other. Liquor is a kind of universal social solvent in disputes, and figures importantly in court cases which are always terminated in a drinking session.

Another technique is simply a payment in money to compensate for damages. In some homicide cases, the payment of "blood money" has compensated the family of the victim to avoid legal action. This is never done, however, if the community agrees that the victim was a witch. Payment of fines in court is another such form of compensation. These payments or offerings minimize the bloodshed or personal involvement in conflictual relations. Payment by the man judged guilty will ensure his reincorporation into his customary place in the community without stigma.

While it is impossible to elicit from informants a theory of roles, it is possible to formulate the principles underlying roles. These are deduced from behavioral observations and from evaluations made of the performances of others. They can be summarized in the following propositions:

1. There is a clear separation between role and role-bearer. This is seen most clearly in the passage through civil and religious offices with a minimum of "halo" effect. It is also found in the situation of household officials whose authority in directing affairs within a household ceases when the ceremony in which they officiate is over. The separation ensures flexibility in a closed social system, enabling people to shift from one role to another. It also permits continuity in a system which requires an almost complete turnover of personnel each year.

2. Function performed is separate from role in which it is performed. This applies even in those roles which are designated on the basis of the most important function required of the performer, for example woman speaker, liquor measurer, and basket carrier. All of

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Appendix 1

Settlement of Domestic Cases

A. House Arrangement of Separation

The following transcription of a tape recording concerns the house arrangement of a domestic dispute involving Alberta, the niece and adopted daughter of Mariano. She left her husband and returned to Mariano's home with her one-year-old child because of her husband's abusive treatment. Mariano invited all of the members of the betrothal party, as well as the maliwanchetik who had assisted in the marriage negotiations and Victorio, Alberta's husband. The leader of the betrothal negotiations was unable to attend because he had been drinking all day at another betrothal party. The arrangement proceeded with the padrino of the wedding, Pablo, and Alvino, Victorio's uncle and another elder in the betrothal negotiations, leading the discussion. I asked Mariano to tape the session so that my presence would not be an interference. In the joking session, the tape recorder became a target for the men's humor when, trying to replay it, they found that one section had not recorded clearly.

Pablo opened the discussion by asking the errant husband's elder representative, Feliciano, if the family wanted to take the girl back. Feliciano agreed that that was their purpose in coming, and that they must hear what happened to cause the dispute between the couple. Maria, the foster mother of Alberta, summarized their complaints against Victorio and his family.

Maria: *It is almost as though the child [Alberta's year-old daughter] has no father. We have been feeding her because we have had to support both of them. When the child became sick with diarrhea the father did nothing to help.*
Pablo: *Yes, we have to think of that. The child was frightened by her father and became ill.*
Maria: *When he came to our house, he fought Alberta, and the child was ill. Alberta went to the courthouse to complain about his behavior.*
Pablo: *It couldn't be arranged in the courthouse. It is better to settle the dispute here in the house.*

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C27 Maria: *Whenever he came to see her, he was drunk and came in fighting.*
593 Victorio: *It is a lie. I came, but I was not only fighting. I wasn't always very*
578 *drunk. I came there sober to speak to you. I asked about how my wife was.*
126 *Then I went to see my uncle in Grandeza. He told me that if he couldn't order*
586 *her to come, then I better come here to hear what is said. When I went there, I was sober. I brought two bottles of beer. He said, "Ah, it is you," when I arrived at his house. "Come in and sit down." I sat down. I took off the cap of the beer and measured it out. "What have you come to say?" he asked me. "I am unhappy, father," I said. "What has happened to you?" he said. "I went to see Alberta," I said. He asked me if I had beaten her, and I said, "No, we only spoke a few words."*

Santia: *But if you hadn't hit her, why would she have come back to her father's house?"*

Victorio: *I only wanted to come to an understanding with her.*

Alvino: *So it is, you came to speak to me.*

Victorio: *It was in order to arrive at an understanding as you had told me. But I didn't succeed then.*

Alvino: *You didn't succeed in what you wanted?*

Victorio: *No, nothing.*

Alvino: *Well, when nothing happened, you could have gone later to ask with good words.*

Victorio: *I returned late in the afternoon. I had been drinking a little beer, and I was a little drunk. My father-in-law came with me. He had a fourth of liquor inside his shirt. We arrived at prayertime. My father-in-law was in the church since he was mayordomo at the time. We came in good faith to hear what was wrong.*

Mariano: *But then he came another time. I had gone to hot country to work. He came to the house and wanted to break it. He pulled out two of the tiles in the gate and entered. That was his crime.*

Victorio's father: *That wasn't good. You shouldn't go drunk when you can't understand anything.*

Maria: *We are not at fault. We spoke to him with good words. We told him he could take his wife.*

Elder woman of Victorio's family: *We told him he ought not to come when he was drunk.*

Pablo: *But now he wants to change for the better. You ought not to drink. It is better to eat meat and vegetables, and find corn and beans for your wife and child. Now we have arranged it, and you can take your wife and child to your house.*

7t Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

Mariano took out cigarettes, and the group relaxed as all lit up the cigarettes and smoked. They discussed my tape recorder as they listened to the tape replayed. When they came to the section that did not record well, they decided that they should take it out and urinate on it. One man suggested that they should put it in prison, and another said that they should shoot it. This provoked general laughter. They went on to discuss the smoking habits of Ladinos. Pablo remarked that Ladino lawyers do nothing but sit in their offices and talk and smoke. Mariano and Victorio's father joked a great deal, the latter maintaining that Pablo had threatened to castrate him. This was picked up by Pablo who said that then Mariano would be a madrina to his godmother, Martina (the woman speaker in the betrothal negotiations). This provoked a great deal of laughter among the women. They then joked with Mariano about Pablo's other madrina, a Ladina from the neighboring town who sells the blood of slaughtered bulls. They refer to her as *me? Skitsoo*, the fat one. Mariano remarked to the women that Victorio's father must be a witch, and someone would try to kill him on the road. The conversation turned from the danger of going alone in the woods to a discussion of hunting. Feliciano bragged that he had an excellent hunting dog which he bought from a Ladino and which he referred to as "the Ladino dog." Mariano asked what Ladino they bought it from, but Feliciano denied knowledge of who the man was. They suggested it was nothing but a Huistecan Indian who changed his clothing. The joking and drinking continued until midnight, when the assembled company finally broke up. The next day Alberta went to live with her husband in the new house he had built.

627 593 578 571 522 586

B. Court Arrangement of Separation

695 593 578 586

Persons present:

Judge
Father of Plaintiff
Mother of Plaintiff
Plaintiff
Husband of Plaintiff
Regidor
President

This case concerns a husband who had been separated from his wife and wished a settlement so that she would return to him. The man had been married before, and he occasionally returned to his first wife. When he got drunk,

621
627 Many cases of adultery never go outside the fences of the sitio, and many witchcraft cases come to the Ayuntamiento only after a murder has been committed in "revenge," in which case the Ayuntamiento is only called in to re-establish order and calm down the relatives of the deceased, trying to avoid further revenge and bloodshed.

794
796 The Mayordomos, on the other hand, have no control over the household Saints which are "owned" by each family and kept in the house in a special altar, nor do they relate directly, within the Church organization, to the many supernatural beings which populate the belief system of the villagers. The "owners of the hills," spirits which inhabit the caves, rivers and wells, the mythological creatures such as the Sombrerón (frightening ghost which appears to tempt people in isolated spots) or Juan Lopez (the local culture hero), and the evil and powerful souls of witches
794 are in a separate domain. These can be controlled only by the
624 curanderos, who have powerful souls, or by the principales. This
774 last group (principales) is also "in charge" of taking care of
776 the health of the village, and do so by having their own souls patrol the boundaries of the community at night and by forbidding entrance to sickness and plagues. The men capable of such supernatural performances "own" animal spirits (nahuales) which help them in their task. Mayordomos, on the contrary, can be men without such powers, and do not need to belong to the select group which deals with the supernatural outside the realms specified by the Catholic Church.

000 The communal offices of the Ayuntamiento and Mayordomías

8: Hunt E-4,5 (1958)1962 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango .
Aguacatenango

621 The government in the communities of Aguacatenango and Amatenango is highly "democratic," meaning by this term two things: (1) The decisions of the governing officials have to be in agreement with the community desires, and it cannot take steps which contradict the written code of rules (norms) or force villagers to spend money, goods or labor outside the areas of maintenance of outside the community. In ultimate instance, the community can overrule the Ayuntamiento, replace particular officers or deny rights to the total body to carry out certain decisions which are against the will of the majority of house heads. Before any important decision is passed, the officers investigate its possible acceptance among the village men, and they would not take steps until there is a margin of security that their word or orders will be taken by them in good will. The officers' concern [627] with the justice of their performance is quite important for them personally, because although a man enjoys immunity while he holds a cargo, he can be threatened with death at the end of his year of service. These threats are delivered by anonymous messages left at the Cabildo (House of the Ayuntamiento) door, specifying the reasons for discontent. Many a presidente municipal has been murdered for trying to introduce into his village some innovation [954] to which the villagers were opposed. Besides direct threats, there is also the "possibility" of being bewitched while not in office.

[565] (2) The second reason why the community government can [602] be called democratic is that there is no ruling class, as in most Mexican-Ladino towns, nor any special kinship group in charge of the town affairs. A man cannot transmit his political power to

621 183 (prideful and authoritarian with equals) and commit other misdemeanors against the village norms.

621 156 Individuals as well as families can be accused of having a "bad heart" or "small heart." In a sense, any social deviant (even a person who possesses peculiar physical characteristics) can be accused of having a "small heart," and, therefore, of being a witch if he abuses his political power while in office, or gets involved in deals with Ladinos, or refuses to spend his capital in community enterprises (not only by refusing cargos, but even if he insists on not paying a limosna).

• 627 754 If an individual is considered a witch, the villagers can try to get rid of him by bewitching him in exchange, and this failing (witches, they think, are difficult to attack because they have powerful souls), can be "condemned" to death. Murders which are witchcraft "revenge" cases occur regularly in the communities. Vengeance against witchcraft is a community affair. If a man develops a reputation as a witch, he knows he cannot count on the support of anybody. Fear and hatred isolate him and his family. He knows that he can be killed, and has to do everything possible to counter-attack the slow but certain build-up of village antagonism which will end in his death, at the most propitious occasion.

The usual procedure in eliminating a witch is for several men, usually those who for particular reasons (such as several recent deaths in their households) feel that they have been personally attacked by the witch, to agree on killing him. This is done in secret, but even then they try to insure, by subtle

8: Hunt E-4,5 (1958)1962 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango .
Aguacatenango

627 754 questioning of other men, that after the murder the community would take their side. If a man is killed, and community understanding accepts that he was a witch, no individual is identified publicly as the instrument of communal revenge. Solid community [593] silence accepts the verdict. Even the family of the deceased has to make a public rejection of the dead witch, or else they risk being forced to leave town, having their house burned, or similar misfortunes. That is to say, they have to publicly establish their innocence by expressing their lack of identification with the witch. Of course, not all conflict is always expressed in witchcraft terms. Witchcraft is, in a sense, the ultimate recourse for the explanation or settlement of disputes when all other means have failed to accomplish the re-establishment of social harmony. 578 627 [754] If one man fights with another in a drunken brawl, for example, he will try, when sober, to make peace with him, rather than let the other man's antagonism become a reason for witchcraft against him. He can try to settle the conflict personally, or the kinsmen of both parties can do it; the case can be taken up by the Ayuntamiento where the man found guilty would pay a fine, and both 627 parties would be lectured on the dangers of quarrelling. Metzger 578 and Kauffman (1961) transcribed and reported one informant's speech which states the case very neatly:

[625] Thus, the mayores, the police, are appointed by the town. You should not quarrel; it is not for the fun of it that they [the town authorities] will come and get you if you look for trouble. They have the commandment of the agente municipal. They have the commandment of the juez municipal, because you have looked for trouble. You will go to jail for one or two days. Then your head and heart will calm down if you did it because of liquor. In clearheadedness you will enter into judgement. If the misdeed is small, the punishment will be

•627 578 small; you will leave having paid five or ten pesos. You will forgive each other. If the misdeed is large, then you will give twenty-five or thirty pesos as your fine, so that we can give something to him who has been injured by you. We will cure him, so that he gets well, so that he may not die. Then he also will give pardon. But if we do not cure him, if we do not give medicine to the one you have hit, then you will quarrel, then his heart will be angered. Because here we have two kinds of misdeeds. He who is evil will do [754] witchcraft. He who does not know witchcraft will give pardon. But he who is evil if he sends sickness to you, then if you get sick, if you die, it is because you did not obey the commandment.

I say this because I am a principal, I am a father [of the town]. I advise you so that the town will go forth in happiness, and in happiness we will increase in our gatherings in the town. But if you are evil, we will not increase, our children will not grow, because there are evil people, there is sickness, there is death from him who knows witchcraft. He who does not know it uses bullets and will kill you that way. Why? Because you sent sickness. So I speak to you thus. Happy, in peace, do not quarrel. It is better.

626 556 [754] The important aspect of witchcraft as a sanctioning procedure is in relation to the distribution of wealth in the community.

A man can accumulate a certain amount of money as long as [454] he is willing to share it with others and spend it in culturally accepted ways, such as buying cohetes for a fiesta, giving a house party for the Saint in the house altar and inviting many [186] villagers, etc. But he cannot simply save it without being accused of miserliness; spend it all in building too large or too different a house without being accused of being embarrassed of his Indianess (of which he should be proud); nor can he invest in businesses which are not the traditional economic activities of the Indian without the fierce criticism of his fellow villagers. There is, then, a top limit to the accumulation of wealth imposed not only by the environmental and technological factors, but by

626 556 the few economic alternatives offered to an Indian who wants to live an Indian life among other Indians, in peace. In this sense, Amatenangueros and Aguacatecos are no "penny capitalists" of the type described by Sol Tax (1953). But it is also true that, like the Panajachel Indians, they desire to have more for themselves and their children: money for security against sickness, death, [146] bad crops and other misfortunes. They also want better clothing, more meat in their diet (the amount of animal protein in their diet is extremely small by western standards) and small extra luxuries which have been introduced into their culture, little by little, by the local Ladino merchants: flashlights, mirrors, etc.

627 556 754 [731] Nevertheless, a wealthy man brings upon himself the antagonism of the other villagers, who, in search of a scapegoat during times of stress (such as a village epidemic) would not hesitate to accuse the rich man of being responsible for bringint the misfortune to the town because of his evil spirit, nor hesitate to kill him. Even if people find a man has a good crop, somebody can assume that, because his own crop failed, the other man has "stolen" the soul of his corn or if a man receives a large inheritance, somebody could accuse him of having killed (by witchcraft) the relative from who he inherited it. It takes a good deal of diplomatic skill and a strong control of the sources of gossip to manage to [753] keep oneself clear of such accusations. On the other hand, villagers are afraid of showing excessive wealth (according to community standards) unless they bring upon themselves the other face of witchcraft: supernatural sickness produced by envy. Even

627 556 754 a man in good standing, if he has too many goods or money, may fear witchcraft because he "knows" that he is a good target for the envy of those who, possessing powerful and evil souls (nahuales), decide to bewitch him and make him sick or kill his children or ruin his next crop.

626 754 Thus, the belief in witchcraft operates at two levels: on the one hand the individual lives according to community norms so that he won't be accused of being a witch. On the other hand he lives according to community norms so that he cannot be bewitched.

754 Because witches attack supernaturally, sending out their animal souls while their human body is asleep, it is not possible to know, for certain, the originator of the sickness nor to protect oneself or others from its powers. There are no sorcery spells to counteract it, but people "know" that witches can, sometimes, put "bad medicines" into drinks while a man is drunk or leave little sticks on the road for the victim to step on and acquire the disease which has been sent because of envy. Everybody denies knowing how to bewitch, but everybody suspects others of being able to do it.

[753] One result of this set of beliefs is that the etiology of disease is thought of as being supernatural. Other misfortunes are also explained in metaphysical terms. Sickness is always present in the village, misfortunes do occur which cannot be predicted, and the villager "experiences," then, the effects of witchcraft in everyday life. Therefore, the threat of supernatural

613 476 [602] The patrilines function in several dimensions. Work groups, although invariably containing some bilateral and affinal relatives, recruit members mainly among agnatic kinsmen. Men fence their fields with the help of their brothers, father and sons; when villagers get together to buy a cow for a town fiesta celebration, each cow is bought by a group which contains agnatically related men. In one case, seventeen men who bought a cow together belonged to four patrilines which were neighbors among themselves. In another case, in which several men got together to build a house, nine were agnatic kinsmen, three were affinals (the son's wife's brother, the daughter's husband and the wife's brother), three were compadres and one a neighbor from across the street. The women who prepared the meal for the housewarming were: nine agnatically related to the household head; two agnatically related to the wife of the household head; three affinals of the household head; two affinals of the wife; and two neighbors. In another case, a man and his two sons, one of whom was living in a separate domestic group, helped in the construction, and several other men were contracted to help with the payment, although the daughter's husband, who was a carpenter, was called in to give advice and help.

613 476 626 627 Individuals, in time of trouble, seek advice from the elders of the patriline, which is the largest unit in which kinship solidarity functions as a controlling social force outside the domestic group. The patriline also exercises control in the form of moral pressure: gossip, accusations of witchcraft, and responsibility for vengeance when a patriline member has been

613 476 murdered. Informants declare that "all the Mendeztik will get 626 together against the Perezetik if a Perez kills a Mendez." We have 627 witnessed cases of "talk of revenge," but never any case of the 613 lineal solidarity functioning in this way in practice. In a case 736 where the father of a man dies, it is within the agnatic line that a man finds a sponsor to live with, to pay his bride-price, and to 613 work the land with. If there is conflict over an adulterous wife, 837 or over the distribution of an inheritance among brothers, it is the 428 duty of the elder members of the agnatic line to give advice, witness the distribution of the property, etc.

613 The patriline is not a land holding unit, in the sense that 423 there is no land that is said to belong to the line as a corporation, but the group of agnatically related men have control over the distribution of it, and its inheritance. If a man dies without adult sons, the closest agnatic kin (father, brother, or in some cases a father's brother if the other two are dead or have enough land) will take over the cultivated fields that he has left. According to the Mexican Agrarian Code, Ejido land can only be transmitted to people that live in the same domestic unit, and communal land cannot be transmitted at all: at the death of the person who held usufruct rights over a parcel, the land should revert to the Ayuntamiento, which has the power to re-distribute it as it considers convenient. In practice, in Aguacatenango, if the household fails to provide heirs, the parcels (both ejido and communal) are re-allocated among agnatic kin. Therefore, although the patriline does not "own" land, some land is allocated through linearity.